

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 IGA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 EB-11 DRC-01

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R 291445Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7168

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 1850

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS; EAID, HA

SUBJECT: HAITIAN PRESIDENT'S REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY BRIDGING
ASSISTANCE

REF: PORT-AU-PRINCE 1786

1. ON OCTOBER 16, I FLEW TO ESTERE BRIDGE SITE WITH DATT
IN GOH HELICOPTER. WE OBSERVED THAT PEOPLE WHO WERE UNABLE
TO USE DESSALINES DETOUR BECAUSE OF RAIN AND FLOOD DAMAGE
WERE ABLE TO LEAVE TRUCKS AND BUSSES AT EITHER END OF BRIDGE,
WALK ACROSS AND BOARD BUSSES AND TRUCKS AT OPPOSITE ENDS.
WE ALSO OBSERVED THAT ANY TEMPORARY REPLACEMENT OF BRIDGE
WOULD REQUIRE PROCUREMENT OF, TRANSPORTATION TO AND INSTAL-
LATION AT SITE OF MORE THAN 75 YARDS OF PONTOONS OR OTHER
BRIDGING MATERIAL OVER FAST RUNNING RIVER.

2. FURTHER INVESTIGATION BY AIDREP REVEALED THAT EVEN IF
SUCH MATERIAL WERE OBTAINABLE, TRANSPORTABLE AND INSTALLABLE
IT WOULD NOT SERVE TO REESTABLISH NORTH/SOUTH COMMUNICATIONS.
THE ROAD SOUTH OF THE PONT D'ESTERE ALMOST TO PONT SONDE
(WHERE THE DESSALINES DETOUR BEGINS) A DISTANCE OF ABOUT
30 KILOMETERS, IS IMPASSABLE BECAUSE OF RAIN AND FLOOD
DAMAGE. THUS EVEN AN EMERGENCY BRIDGE WOULD BE INACCES-
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SIBLE UNTIL THIS STRETCH OF ROAD IS REBUILT.

3. INVESTIGATION ALSO SHOWS THAT THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC
WORKS IS TOTALLY UNAWARE OF THE PROPOSAL CITED REFTTEL.

HIS ROAD MAINTENANCE DIVISION CHIEF STATES THAT THE DESSALINES DETOUR SHOULD BE PASSABLE AGAIN IN A WEEK OR TEN DAYS AND WILL BE EASIER TO MAINTAIN NOW THAT DRY SEASON BEGINNING. EVERYONE AGREES THAT MUCH OF THE EARLIER DAMAGE TO THE DETOUR WAS DONE BY OVERLOADED TRUCKS.

4. INVITATIONS TO BID FROM THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS ARE ALREADY OUT FOR A NEW PERMANENT ESTERE BRIDGE AND CONTRACT SHOULD BE AWARDED IN MID-DECEMBER WITH WORK STARTING IN LATE JANUARY AND COMPLETION EXPECTED AS EARLY AS MID-SUMMER 1974, OR BY NOVEMBER AT LATEST.

5. IN SUMMARY, EMERGENCY U.S. ASSISTANCE OF THE SORT REQUESTED IN REFTEL WOULD BE EXPENSIVE AND TECHNICALLY DIFFICULT AND WOULD NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM POSED. QUICKEST SHORT-TERM REESTABLISHMENT OF NORTH/SOUTH TRAFFIC, PENDING CONSTRUCTION OF NEW ROAD AND PERMANENT BRIDGE, LIES IN REOPENING OF DESSALINES DETOUR.

6. RECOMMENDATION: THAT EMBASSY BE AUTHORIZED TO REPLY TO REQUEST REPORTED REFTEL ALONG LINES PARA 5 ABOVE.
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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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30 JUN 2005

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